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ABSTRACT

The Georgia League of Professional Schools is a school and university collaborative formed to support school renewal. It currently includes 54 elementary and secondary schools and the University of Georgia. Schoolwide action research is simply cooperative disciplined inquiry within a framework that provides some structures for working together. This paper, part of the fourth report on action research in the League, is a look at the results of action research on students and the cultural environment of the school based on on-site reports and action plans from 41 of the 52 participant schools. Eleven schools have identified changes in student achievement and behavior, and 14 schools cited the provision of new experiences for students as a positive outcome. Changes in school culture, including increased communication and an increase in shared decision making, are identified for a number of the schools. Ways in which action research is impeded in member schools are also identified and discussed. The difficulties the schools experience are the same for the League as a unit, but determination to engage in schoolwide action research is seen in both arenas. Appendix 1 contains a three-part item about project interviews, and Appendix 2 contains two tables. (Contains 43 references.) (SLD)

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RESULTS OF SCHOOLWIDE ACTION RESEARCH IN THE LEAGUE OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

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A paper presented to the Annual Meeting
of the American Educational Research Association

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Results of Schoolwide Action Research in the League of Professional Schools

by Emily Calhoun and Lew Allen

What is happening inside the schools as staff members learn to inquire together, to generate individual and collective knowledge and action simultaneously? Some of us believe that schoolwide action research is a full-service model for school renewal. As we test this belief, we look at what happens in schools seriously engaged in conducting action research. What happens for students? What student behavioral and social changes occur? What changes evolve in the learning environment created for students? What happens for the adults working in schools? What changes evolve in the workplace environment they are seeking to re-create? These are a few of the questions we struggle to answer as we conduct action research within the Georgia League of Professional Schools.

Those of you who have worked with school/university collaboratives, intermediate service agencies, or school district offices know how elusive student effects and cultural effects can be, regardless of the time, energy, resources, breadth of the initiative, and good intentions. In this paper, we share what we are learning about these effects as we work with the 54 members of the League, and we share a little about the conduct of action research by these schools and about the technical assistance provided to them.

Many of the schools we work with in and out of the League of Professional Schools handle action research much as they do other good ideas they select as worthy content for staff time, with worthy defined in terms of school improvement potential. Ideas such as strategic planning, heterogeneous grouping, cooperative learning, whole language, interdisciplinary curriculum are selected by school faculties and administrators because of their promise. Seriously implemented and studied throughout the school, any good curricular/instructional innovation can bring about student effects, and, in some cases, depending on the magnitude of the effort, cultural changes also. In schoolwide action research, however, we engage in it knowing full well that the norms in most schools will be disrupted and that we will have to deal with the attendant social turmoil of an organization in transition.

Schoolwide action research is simply cooperative disciplined inquiry. Its behavioral framework provides us with some structures for working together as members of an organization while leaving the selection of the focus of the inquiry up to the members of each organization. Its purpose is improvements in practices that support the attainment of goals valued by the members of the organization and by other stakeholders in the organization. Its implementation generates new cultural norms as we change the patterns of interaction, the content of discourse, and the breadth of action focused on improving student learning. Its institutionalization means we have created and assimilated a self-

renewing organization that supports our collective and individual work and continuously assesses the effects of this work on the lives of our students.

Lewin and Corey, early sponsors and leaders of action research for improving practices within the organization, knew that cultural change would occur. They knew that most organizations could not conduct good action research without cultural change, regardless of their current state of performance. **Different patterns of interaction among groups and individuals within the organization and disciplined inquiry into the effects of actions sanctioned and adopted by the organization were their primary reasons for promoting action research.** These organizational leaders of the 1940's and 1950's wanted organizations to function differently. They wanted our schools to develop a culture of continuous study and self renewal.

Most of our schools, from the private schools of the 1700's to the common schools of the 1800's to the public schools of today, are operated more as centers for transmission of the primary culture, for control of youth, and for coverage of long-valued, static content than as centers of inquiry for our youth or for the adults responsible for leading these youth. Because of the stability of societal norms for accepting schools as they are, or even encouraging them to greater rigidity and less flexibility, designing our public educational institutions as workplaces where continuous study and reflection on professional practices is a normative part of school life has been rare. As difficult as it is for us as educators to express, collective inquiry around common goals by all members of the organization and selection of and training in actions that will help in attaining these common goals are innovations that assault the norms of most schools.

In large schools and small, in elementary and secondary schools, in rural and urban schools, problems arise and remain when faculties cannot identify a collective focus on student learning and cannot acknowledge that improvements in student learning will require changes in the daily behavior of teachers and administrators. As Muncey and McQuillan (1993) remind us, even when school faculties have an articulated consensus for schoolwide change, it may only happen for a few students and teachers, as it so often has in the past. And as we remind ourselves in the League, good intentions, exciting activities, and excellent action plans are not enough, what behaviors are we changing to bring about the new behaviors we wish to see in students?

In the early stages of school renewal, we are far less clear that we are actually asking ourselves to change. The rallying calls of the current reform movement for "restructuring schools," "transforming leadership," "empowering teachers," and "total quality management" have created a time of great promise for education. We must be wary, however, of

externalizing the demands of these calls, for the school is where renewal happens, and the process begins with ourselves. We are the ones to reform first. Many of us want others to change: students, colleagues, principals, district office personnel, parents, the community. Or, we look for new structures that will make the difference: new discipline codes, new ways of scheduling, different ways of assessing performance. If educational history provides any guidance, there are no comprehensive programs, no encompassing innovations, no degree of strategic planning, and no amount of money that will bring about the schools that many of us want. Only changes in our behavior, possibly through serious engagement in some of these innovations, can bring about these richer learning/living places for our students and for ourselves.

League member schools voluntarily seek school renewal through their affiliation with the League of Professional Schools at the University of Georgia. These school member faculties commit to the pursuit of the three premises of shared governance, focus on student learning, and schoolwide action research. Some of these school faculties recognize that they are embracing innovations that require cultural changes that may well shatter the normative patterns of behavior in their schools; some school faculties, maybe most, do not recognize the cultural implications of the journey they are beginning. Many of these faculties--even the most successful ones in terms of implementing the three premises--have weathered some tough times in organizational and personal development as they sought to work together as a learning community. However, as they focus their school renewal process more directly on things that help students learn better, some of the initial frustrations have dissipated and the satisfaction has become greater.

During the past five years, League staff members and some school staff members have studied the initiation of schoolwide action research (collective disciplined inquiry) in public schools. We have struggled in our roles as participant observers and facilitators to keep our attention on the data being generated and on the context within which it is generated.

The information we share in this paper is part of our fourth report on action research in the Georgia League of Professional Schools. In our first report (Calhoun, 1991), we focused on the types of data collected by schools and how they used this information; in our second report (Calhoun, 1992), we focused again on data collection and expanded our focus to include the behaviors of faculties as they conducted schoolwide action research; in our third report (Calhoun and Glickman, 1993), we focused on successes, difficulties, and concerns that arise as school staff learn to use on-site information and external information from the literature to select collective actions for implementation and assess the effects of these actions. This year, we disciplined ourselves, just as we ask our school members to, and

focused on the results of action research on students and on the cultural environment of the school.

Other than ourselves, we have **three primary audiences** for this report and for the results of our action research on action research: **One** is the League staff and the Governing Board of the League. Members of these two groups use the results 1) to select the content for future League meetings, services to schools, and the nature and types of information, examples, and processes selected for sharing across League schools and 2) to better understand the nature, difficulties, and possibilities of network/collaboration between schools and universities. **Two** is the member schools, for whom we are trying to model the action research process. And, **three** is the larger professional community, especially those persons interested in studying the action research process and how to make it more effective.

For this A.E.R.A. session, we have built this report and our presentation about action research in the Georgia League of Professional Schools around the five questions listed below:

1. What technical assistance has been provided to support action research among member schools?

2. What has been the nature of data collection and utilization?

3. What have been the effects on students?

4. How has action research affected the culture of the organization?

5. What advice do we have to offer individuals, small groups, or school faculties as they begin action research in their schools?

The format of our presentation is as follows. First, we provide some context for the results by sharing a brief description of the League of Professional Schools, of action research as promoted by the League, and of the data sources used in this report. Then we respond to these five questions and share our reflections at this point in our inquiry.

What is the League of Professional Schools?

The League of Professional Schools is a school/university collaborative formed to support school renewal. Currently, the League includes 54 elementary and secondary schools in Georgia, with university participation provided through the Program for School

Improvement at the University of Georgia. Nineteen of these 54 schools have been League members for four full years; seventeen for three years; and eighteen for two years.

Basically, the League is a network held together by common goals. Schools volunteer to join. Schools interested in affiliating with the League send a team that includes building administrators, teachers, and if the team wishes, representatives from their district office, to a two-day orientation and planning workshop. Teachers represent the majority of participants in each school team. The primary tasks of workshop participants are to gather information about shared governance, enhanced education, and action research as supported by the League. If, after this workshop, team members believe that affiliation with the League can help their school move forward, they take this information back to the staff at their school.

Acceptance into the League is contingent upon having 80% of the faculty vote by secret ballot to join and having the approval of the appropriate school district officials. In their letter of application for membership, these schools sign a commitment to collect data to assess progress on their initiative(s). This application or commitment letter specifies activities League staff agree to provide and activities schools agree to pursue, e.g. shared governance, instructional initiatives that promote student learning, and action research.

Shared governance or democratic decision making is used to tap the collective wisdom resident on-site in any school and the collective energy and resocialization needed to bring about major school change. An emphasis on student learning and instruction is used because "teaching" is the major work of the school. And action research is critical in school renewal in order to know the current status of progress on goals, to make more informed, to direct action to optimum possibilities for goal attainment, and to model the problem-solving approach to life as a normal way of business in schools both for the benefit of professionals living there and students required to be there.

All school teams receive five basic services through membership in the League: (a) four days of meetings during each membership year, generally focused on shared decision-making, school member descriptions of progress, school-based initiatives, and action research; (b) an Information Retrieval System that provides articles, research information, and resource connections relevant to schoolwide goals; (c) a biannual network exchange newsletter, In Sites; (d) telephone consultations with League staff; and (e) a one-day, on-site visit by a facilitator, followed up by a summary report to the school that describes the facilitator's perception of the current status of shared governance, focus on student learning and instruction, and action research in the school.. Optional services include summer institutes on team building (no fee) and action research and additional on-site consultations

on action research (no fee).

Representatives from the schools govern the League; they determine the services that are provided, develop policies, and set membership fees. (The school fee for joining the League has remained at $1000.00 per school year for five years.) Basically, the support provided to our schools is "heavy" in its networking and collaboration with school teams together, but very "light" in amount of time and extent of on-site assistance to individual schools. The amount of service provided, from telephone consultations to use of the Information Retrieval System, is at the discretion of each school facilitator team or leadership team. As could be expected in a self-governing system, some schools seek more information and assistance than others.

The Schools

Of the 54 school members in 1993-94, there were 33 elementary schools, 10 middle schools, and 11 high schools. Nine of these schools were in urban settings, 26 in suburban, and 19 in rural. Twelve schools had 10% or fewer students on free and reduced lunch; 13 schools had 11%-25%; 14 had 26%-50%; 12 had 51%-75%; and 3 had over 75%. Minority populations ranged from 23 schools with 10% or less minority student enrollment; 7 with 11%-25%; 14 with 26%-50%; 6 with 51%-75%; and 4 with over 75%.

In size of population of elementary schools, 2 schools had less than 250 students; 6 had between 251 and 500; 17 between 501 and 800; 5 had between 801 and 1200; 3 schools had over 1200. For the ten middle schools, 4 had student populations of 600 to 800; 4 had between 801 and 1000 students; and 2 schools had over 1000. For high schools, 2 had student populations between 400 and 600; 1 school had between 601 and 1200; 5 schools had populations between 1201 and 1400; 1 school had between 1401 and 1800 students; and 2 schools had over 1800 students. Regionally, the League includes schools from north, central, and south Georgia.

Action Research Within the League

Action research of all types--individual, collaborative, and schoolwide--is encouraged in the League of Professional Schools. However, the primary category of action research that is supported and promoted by the League matches Lewin's (1947, 1948) action-research-for-social-change framework and is focused on school improvement (Corey, 1953). School improvement is sought in three senses or domains. One is the improvement of the organization as a problem-solving entity. With repeated cycles of action research, the faculty as a collegial group should become better and better able to work together to identify

problems and solve them. Second, is an improvement in equity for students. For example, if the faculty studies the writing process in order to offer better instructional opportunities for students, the intent is that all students benefit, not just those taught by a few faculty members. Third, is the breadth and content of the inquiries themselves. In the example given above, it is intended that the quality of writing improve throughout the school. And in an area of common concern or interest, every classroom and every teacher are involved in collective study and regular assessment of effects on students. As they strive for schoolwide growth, faculty members may involve students and parents, and even the general community, in data collection and interpretation and in the selection of options for action.

For conducting schoolwide action research, we recommend that League school faculties structure routines for continuous confrontation with data on the health of their school community. These routines are loosely guided by movement through **five phases of inquiry: faculty members select an area or problem of collective interest; collect, organize, and interpret on-site data and external data related to this area of interest; and take action based on this information** (Calhoun, 1991; Glickman, 1990). These phases overlap inherently and action researchers constantly retrace their steps and revise earlier phases before (or while) going forward again. This collective inquiry into the work of school professionals (teaching) and its effects on students (learning and development) is a cyclical process that serves as formative evaluation of initiatives undertaken by the school community.

Sources of Data Reported

In responding to the five questions about schoolwide action research in League schools, we used 36 action plans generated by the schools for 1993-1993 and 5 action plans that continued from 1992-1993; 41 reports from the one-day, on-site facilitation visits. We have two of our 54 member schools, one fourth-year member elementary school and one second-year member high school, that are primarily non-participants in League activities and services this year. So the on-site reports and action plans represent information from 41 (79%) of our 52 participating schools.

We acknowledge that most of these data sources are perceptual, including the 41 facilitator reports based on interviews with school personnel and visits in each school (see Item 1 in the Appendix for a copy of the procedures and protocols used for all on-site visits), and that much of the information collected is derived from school members' self-reports of their experiences. The amount of information provided by each school varies tremendously. Also, even though facilitators use standardized protocols, interview questions, and outlines for the on-site visits and reports, what is noticed, attended to, and reported

does vary by facilitator interest and style of interaction.

In responding to the five questions listed on page four, we also used documents provided by schools, such as examples of data they had collected and shared; records from League files on the use of the Information Retrieval System; behavioral indicators of what schools do (for example, which schools attend regular meetings, which schools attend optional meetings, what kinds of information do school teams request, etc.); and proceedings from meetings, items such as agenda, notes, and surveys.

Our cycle of inquiry for action research on the League as a community mirrors that of the schools: our area of focus is action research and its effects; we gather and organize any information from the schools and from our files that relate to action research; we analyze this information and try to understand what our school communities are experiencing as they engage in action research and what we as facilitators of this inquiry are experiencing; then we think about what to do immediately and in the long-term to move forward in school renewal through action research.

In terms of the nitty-gritty technical aspects of data collection, we do a lot of counting. Which schools do what and how often and to what degree? We do a lot of talking and asking questions of each other and of our colleagues in the schools. Then we do more counting and reflection. At regular intervals, we try to stand back from it all--from the daily activities of keeping everything going and from the specifics of our data--and figure out where we are in this inquiry and what we are learning about school renewal and about ourselves as facilitators.

Support Provided by the League for Schoolwide Action Research

The major changes made by the League of Professional Schools to support schoolwide action research during the course of the five years from 1990 through 1994 has been to gradually provide **more time** during League meetings, **more structure about how to conduct schoolwide action research** in the materials developed and shared with the schools, and **more technical assistance** for schools as they learn to conduct action research. Data (primarily surveys and school team generated documents) were collected at every League meeting and used to refine or select services, identify sessions for future meetings, identify materials that needed to be created or provided, identify items that needed to be included in the League newsletter, and take "loose readings" of where the schools were making progress and where they were getting stuck.

In the fall of 1992, League staff and school representatives determined that a more comprehensive and systematic approach than was used in 1990 and 1991 was necessary if schoolwide action research was going to affect decisions made and actions taken in member schools. In November 1992, teachers from eleven League schools, representing six school districts, met with League staff members to plan how they could facilitate action research within the League. A decision was made to have a group of teachers and principals working in League schools that have had successful experiences with action research train themselves collaboratively to act as action research facilitators to other schools. This group was called the Action Research Consortium (ARC). The Consortium represents a cadre of action research facilitators available to assist League schools. Currently, League schools may call on the Consortium, at no expense, for a range of services. For example, a presentation introducing the school staff to action research, assistance with methods of data collection, or assistance with the organization and presentation of data.

During the past thirteen months, five schools have sought the services of the Action Research Consortium. Three of these schools were elementary, and two were middle schools. Four of these schools wanted basic information on action research presented to their faculty. One school is still engaged in an ongoing relationship in which an ARC member works with the school-based task force on data collection, organization, and analysis. The relative lack of use of this service may be attributed to the lack of "advertising." In the section on "Suggestions for Reflection" that facilitators included in the on-site reports, many recommended the services of ARC to schools that the facilitators perceived needed assistance in moving forward in action research.

From the League's inception in 1989, all sessions focusing on schoolwide action research had been optional breakout sessions or workshops. Based on the data gathered from the League school members for 1992-1993, schoolwide action research had been difficult to implement without the acquisition of knowledge and new skills and a plan for implementation. Action research was becoming an integral part of the decision-making process in approximately one-fourth of our member schools. Another one-fourth recognized the value of action research and had begun to use it to some extent. The remainder of the schools were just in the beginning phases of the process.

Consequently, the theme of the **February 1993** League meeting was action research. During this meeting, League schools were introduced to the Action Research Consortium described above and to the services that members of the Consortium would provide. For the first time ever, at a regular meeting of the League of Professional schools, sessions on action research were conducted as part of the general session for all participants. Previous to this date, the only time the topic had been the focus for a general session had been at the

Orientation and Planning Workshop prior to a school's affiliation with the League. In sharp contrast to the theory, description, and process presentations conducted to build knowledge and application of shared governance within the school, the study of schoolwide action research had remained an optional session or an optional meeting for three years. While League staff encouraged members of school teams to divide their attendance among sessions being conducted at each meeting, there had been no structured time to bring the League participants as a learning community to the same level of understanding as they were acquiring in shared governance.

In **May 1993**, two breakout sessions on shared governance and action research were conducted as part of the spring planning meeting for all League schools. One session was primarily for teachers; one was primarily for principals.

In the **June 1993**, an optional Action Research Institute was conducted by members of the Action Research Consortium. A overview session was offered for beginners. Another session was conducted as a working, hands-on session in which participants brought their data and ARC members helped school participants get started with data analysis. About 15 people (from 7 schools) attended the session on beginning action research, and about 9 people (from 4 schools) attended the second session on data analysis.

In **October 1993**, action research was a major topic at the two-day annual conference of the League of Professional Schools. On day one of the conference, four of the nineteen breakout sessions were on action research. The Action Research Consortium gave an overview of action research, and representatives from three League schools presented action research they were conducting. On day two, representatives from two secondary schools not affiliated with the League presented schoolwide action research as conducted in their sites: Shoreline High School and Ames Middle School.

The **Information Retrieval System** is one of the services provided by the League staff to all League school members. It was designed to provide schools with external information relevant to their schoolwide goals and initiatives. For 1993-1994, 39 of the 52 member schools made requests for information that related to their school goals or initiatives. One hundred fifty-nine requests (159) were made. The six topics on which searches were requested by 15 to 20 schools each were as follows: 1) non-graded, multiage approaches; 2) site-based management; 3) at-risk students; 4) discipline; and 5) alternative assessment; and 6) teacher/management/climate issues such as class size, teaching assistants, time management, scheduling, year round schools, and teacher morale. Please see Item 2 in the Appendix for a table that illustrates levels of use of the Information Retrieval System for the last four years.

We--League staff members and associates and members of the Congress which governs the actions of the League--continue to study the implementation of action research in member schools and its effectiveness for enhancing student learning. More meeting time devoted to action research, more presentations by League schools, and more technical assistance provided to schools may help action research become an integral part of school life in more member schools. But support from the League is just one factor in moving forward in action research: core groups within each school need to become informed about schoolwide action research and its conceptual promise and become skilled in using the process as part of regular cooperative inquiry into the effects of school-based actions on the lives of students. Members of the Action Research Consortium recommend the appointment of an individual or a task force group in each school to be in charge of action research. **All of the schools that are conducting schoolwide action research have an individual or small group who has taken leadership and responsibility for making it happen.**

The Nature of Data Collection and Use by League Schools

In League schools, each faculty determines the questions it wishes to explore about the effects of its instructional program on students. The methodology used by the faculty in studying the school site may be quantitative and as simple as counting instances, qualitative and as complex as multi-year case studies, or a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of investigation and exploration. School teams are encouraged to, and provided with examples of how to, collect behavioral and perceptual data sources on both the learner and the learning environment.

In this section, we briefly address the content of the focus areas selected by school faculties for collective action, the types of on-site data sources used by League schools, and the number of schools that identify the use of external information as a data source used in their collective decision-making process. The message of this section and the nature of data use has changed little from our earlier, more in-depth reports (Calhoun, 1991; Calhoun 1992).

These data on the **focus areas for schoolwide action research** were derived from the school on-site reports and from current action plans. They are presented in terms of the dominant initiative described in these reports and plans. Eleven schools focused directly on student learning goals; ten schools focused on changes in instruction or on the implementation of an instructional innovation; and three schools focused primarily on curriculum changes. Twenty-six schools were focused on a range of areas, especially special education inclusion, changes in scheduling, student motivation, communication within the school, creating a positive environment, developing statements of core values or a school

philosophy, or studying areas of interest for possible action. There were two schools for whom neither an on-site report nor a current action plan were available.

The most **common data sources used by League schools** were surveys, existing/archival data, and the results of standardized tests. The content of these surveys were student attitudes about a subject area, teacher attitude or knowledge about a subject area, the climate of the school as a unit, needs assessments related to staff concerns, and surveys of students that requested information about a current or potential change. Fourteen League schools cited the use of information from surveys.

The organization and use of existing/archival data was the major identifiable difference from earlier reports on data-use in League schools. More school faculties are looking at data in their files and disaggregating these data to inform them about student life in school. These faculties are looking at grades, discipline referrals, suspensions, remediation actions, absences, failure rates, number of students on the honor roll, number and retention in Chapter I programs, library circulation and use by students, and responses from parents to invitations for involvement. Twenty-two League schools reported the use of existing/archival data as a source of information.

Eleven schools reported the collective study of standardized test results by the faculty as a data source that informed them about both student achievement and the effects of organizationally sanctioned actions on student achievement.

A few schools reported the use of more conventional and creative data sources such as writing samples, math products, logs of performance, interviews, and videotapes.

Using only data derived from the 41 on-site visits and reports, nine schools reported **the study of articles and other professional literature** as a sources of external information that informed their decision-making process. More schools may well be engaged in the collective study of external sources that relate to their area(s) of interest, but if so, this study had not permeated the culture enough to be an identifiable influence on decisions or actions.

Results of Schoolwide Action Research

In this section, we describe the effects on students and on the organization as action research is implemented. Of course, schools in the League seek to implement shared governance as well as action research. These shared governance structures and processes are used to determine schoolwide goals and the actions which will be supported by the school community as a unit. Since we view shared decision making, a focus on student learning,

and the study of effects of actions taken as essential elements in schoolwide action research, we do not attempt to separate the effects of the three League premises when we explore what is happening for students. However, when we look at cultural effects on the school as an organization, we focus in more sharply on action research and how cooperative disciplined inquiry is faring in these schools.

Effects on Students

As we studied the identified effects on students as derived from the complete sets of information available on 41 schools, they seemed to divide into three types or categories: one was effects on academic achievement and student behavior; one was effects on student experiences in the learning environment; and one was effects on students as participants in schoolwide initiatives.

Effects on Achievement and Behavior. Eleven League schools identified and shared schoolwide changes in student achievement and/or behavior based on data they have collected. Five of these schools were elementary; four were middle schools; and two were high schools. Two of these schools were fourth-year members; five were third-year members; and four were second year members.

Five of these schools reported increases in student achievement as indicated by course grades and/or results of standardized achievement tests. In general, we do not know the magnitude of these changes, for some schools shared the results of their organized data and others did not. Five of these schools had major reductions in referrals and suspensions (two of these were high schools that also decreased student failure rate and improved course grades). An emphasis for these school was to have students present for instruction and to keep a sharp collective watch on the number of referrals, suspensions, and absences. They looked at when and where incidents occurred, what was done as follow-up, and what seemed to work with repeat offenders.

One of the elementary schools has reduced its referral and suspension rate by approximately 25% a year, for three years running. A middle school has been effective enough through its family or "House" units and counseling program that referrals and in-house suspensions have been cut in half. The number of students sent to alternative school the first semester of 1992-1993 was 191, for the first semester of 1993-1994, the number was reduced to 81 students sent off-campus for alternative schooling. One elementary school whose initiative was to increase students' reading and writing recorded 58,284 books read outside of school by its 660 students. Other effects addressed by these eleven schools include improvements in attendance (2 schools), improvements in student self esteem as indicated

by the Pre/posttest results of a student self-esteem survey and by teacher observations, and improved attitudes toward mathematics as indicated by the results of an end-of-year student survey.

Effects on the Learning Environment. Fourteen other schools cited the provision of new experiences for their students as a result of their shared-decision making/action research process. Nine of these schools were elementary; two were middle schools; and three were high schools. Four of these schools were fourth-year League members; five were third-year members; and five were second-year members.

Some of the items in this category are included in the section on cultural effects under "actions taken as a result of schoolwide action research." Items that formed this category were those that interviewees identified as **changing the experience of education** for students in their school.

Six schools reported that students now have more opportunities to read books of their choice during the school day as part of their regular curriculum. Four schools reported that they operate more as a community or family, with less segregation by ability level. Three schools reported providing more time for students to write during the school day and more writing instruction. Two schools reported the installation of new computer labs to support their initiatives in technology; and two schools reported new courses offered to students. One of the high schools that has been studying the effects of its algebra program for three years added an algebra follow-up course this year; two years ago it began offering a pre-algebra course. And one elementary school added high school mentors for its at-risk students. (Some of these schools cited more than one effect.)

Effects on Student Participation in Schoolwide Decisions. Nine schools cited increased student involvement in schoolwide issues. Five of these schools were counted in the twenty-five schools above (citing effects on achievement and behavior or on the learning opportunities provided for students). Four of these schools were elementary, and five were high schools. Three of these schools were fourth-year League members, and six were third-year members.

These nine schools reported various techniques for involving students in the decision-making process. Three high schools added a student or students to the school leadership team (schoolwide decision-making body). Two elementary schools and one high school have formed a body of students to make recommendations. Two of these bodies are permanent groups; one was created to make recommendations to the school leadership team, and one was created to provide more student input into what happens at the school and into

decisions being considered for action. One elementary school formed a student group, just for this year, to survey and interview students about "rules to live by" in their school. Student representatives from every kindergarten through fifth grade classroom met with the leadership team, gathered information from classmates, organized the information and presented it to the leadership team, and continued to report back and forth between their classrooms and the leadership team until they reached agreement about common principles of community behavior. Three other schools, two elementary and one high school, have established a pattern of round table and town meeting sessions during which students are asked about specific issues, discuss concerns, or respond to questions about possible initiatives.

It is worth noting that five of these schools that involved students more in the shared decision-making process were high schools, that the League only has eleven high schools, and that all nine of these schools had been members of the League for three or four full years.

Of the remaining twenty-five League schools, twelve schools reported no effects on their students from their work in shared governance or schoolwide action research. For eleven schools the on-site summary reports are not available, and two schools have not participated in any League activities this year.

Three League schools have teachers engaged in individual and collaborative action research. Two of these schools, working closely with their university facilitator, have used individual and collaborative action research extensively to study effects of their actions on students, to study their teaching strategies, and to reflect on their experiences. Teachers in these schools and their university facilitator will be publishing a book with Teachers College Press in 1995.

Reflections on Student Effects. In our interviews with four or more staff members in every school, we ask about the effects of their current initiatives on students. In four years of conducting basically the same interview protocol in schools, a funny thing happens repeatedly in many interviews in many schools. When we ask about effects on students the responses elicited do not describe effects on students. Instead, interviewees often describe the attributes of the current initiative, which has already been addressed earlier in the interview, or they describe how this individual or her/his colleagues or students are responding generally to the primary initiatives. Many interviewees do not respond in terms of any data that have been collected to determine the effects of the initiative(s) they have described. When this general response is followed up with a probe about specific effects on students, most interviewees talk about what they "feel" is happening, what they "see"

happening for students, and what they "know" has changed about or for students. As Glickman would say, they respond in terms of cardiac data, what they know in their hearts is happening, not in terms of evidence they have collected.

Only in those schools conducting strong schoolwide action research or struggling to conduct schoolwide action research, do interviewee responses provide a consensus about what is happening for students in their school through their collective action. In many schools, staff members respond to interview questions about the effects on students of their collectively determined schoolwide initiative by discussing what is happening solely in their individual classrooms, what they "feel" is happening, or respond that it is too early to determine any results for students. These responses that simply provide greater detail about the initiative or its attributes may be another tangible sign of the traditional cultural problem of focusing on the implementation of an innovation without focusing simultaneously on the attainment of goals for which that innovation was selected. In other words, getting caught up in the activities that compose the "means" instead of anchoring our thoughts in the "ends" that pertain to student learning.

Effects on School Culture

> "Culture is a social invention created to give meaning to human endeavor. It provides stability, certainty, and predictability. . . .as a construct [it] helps explain why classrooms and schools exhibit common and stable patterns across variable conditions. Internally, culture gives meaning to instructional activity and provides a symbolic bridge between action and results. . . . Externally, culture provides the symbolic facade that evokes faith and confidence among outsiders with a stake in education . . . ."
>
> T.E. Deal (1993) "The Culture of Schools"

What are the cultural effects of shared decision making and schoolwide action research in League schools? Are there any changes occurring in the patterns of interaction or in current educational practices? In this section, we share some indicators of cultural change derived from the 41 on-site visits, reports, and action plans. First, we will share some counts of what is happening, much in the fashion of who is drinking from the well and who is not; then we will share some brief descriptions of common educational practices that impede the implementation of schoolwide action research in League schools; and finally, some reflections about cultural change and schoolwide action research.

Increases in Shared Decision Making Between Administrators and Teachers and Among Teachers and Teachers. More organizational members are more involved in making decisions about what affects their lives. Of our 52 participating member schools, we have 41 on-site reports for the 1993-1994 school year. Thirty (30) of these reports identify increases in shared decision-making as a change that has occurred within the school. Broader inclusion in decision making has become a factor in the school life of many staff members who were interviewed.

Teachers, and in some cases paraprofessionals and teaching assistants, are making decisions through representative bodies such as School Councils or Leadership Teams about schoolwide directions. They make curriculum decisions such as whether they will use textbooks or not, whether they will adopt whole language or not, whether they will develop thematic units or not. They make decisions about the organization of education for students and how opportunities will be provided, such as how to integrate all student populations more fully into the regular classroom, how to engage "turned-off students" more fully into the educational opportunities offered during the school day, and how to develop technological expertise among their students. Of course, some are making low-impact decisions about telephones in the teachers' lounge, length of time between class periods, and the operation of in-school suspension. But regardless of the content of the decisions being made, almost all of the League schools have expanded schoolwide decision making in some area far beyond the sole administrator or the administrator and teacher advisory group to at least an elected facilitation team with the principal as standing member.

Improvements in Schoolwide Communication. Communication about schoolwide changes and the rationale for these changes has improved. Of the 52 fourth, third, and second year members, thirty indicated in the 1993-1994 reports that staff members are more informed about what is happening in their school and that more information sharing and more reflections about practice were occurring. Twenty-five of these thirty school are the same ones that described increases in shared decision-making. It would appear that increased involvement in the decision-making process relates to increased communication among faculty members.

Gradually, League schools have added more structure to the communication of information within the school, and in some cases to the broader public community. Facilitation and Leadership Team members from many schools now send out to all staff members or faculty members, depending on the role-breadth of their governing body, public minutes following each team meeting. Most schools have Liaison Groups or Study Groups that provide a two-way flow of information between the Facilitation Team and all staff members. Staff members in five schools (and this may well be true in other schools but has

not been documented) indicated that their principal had become aware of the need to keep all faculty members fully informed about changes and their rationale, even if the change did not evolve from within the school. Through a combination of elected representatives, of faculty meetings during which decisions are made about collective action, of liaison groups that discuss concerns about or effects of innovations, and the collective confrontation with data through schoolwide action research, communication among the adults has improved in most schools. And, in most instances, this improvement has been spoken of favorably by those persons interviewed in each school.

Less well-documented, but there nevertheless, is a greater awareness of the need for information by all members of the school community and a greater awareness of the need to be informed and to inform others.

Collection of and Sharing of Data That Relate to the Achievement, Behavior, or Attitudes of All Students. Twenty-seven schools reported the collection and sharing of schoolwide data about their students. Ten of these schools were fourth-year members; eleven were third-year members; and six were second-year members. Seventeen were elementary schools; four were middle schools; and six were high schools.

The following counts will add to more than twenty-seven schools, because several school faculties used multiple data sources to inform themselves about the health of the school or about their primary initiative. Fourteen schools reported the use of surveys: surveys of students attitudes about a subject area, school climate surveys, self-esteem surveys, and surveys about changes that had been made such as the requirement of wearing uniforms at school. Thirteen schools reported the organization and sharing of data on student discipline referrals and suspensions. Eleven schools reported the sharing and discussion of results from standardized tests. Nine schools reported the organization and sharing of subject area grades. Other data sources reported by one or two schools include the schoolwide sharing of information about the number of books read by their student population, library circulation, numbers of students in special programs, and numbers of students taking advanced courses.

Data-Related Changes Made. Twenty-five schools reported making changes of taking action based on data. Seven of these schools were fourth-year members; eleven were third-year members; and seven were second-year members. Seventeen were elementary schools; three were middle schools; and five were high schools. (Total participating E = 32; MS = 10; HS = 10.)

The range of changes made vary from minor organizational adjustments to the hiring of additional personnel. Each of the following seven changes were identified by three to five schools: changes in scheduling; changes in communication processes; adding additional staff, increasing the number of volunteers working in the school, or providing older students as tutors or mentors; greater emphasis and provision of staff development; the addition of new courses, new units added to existing courses, or revisions in the content of existing courses; changes in discipline techniques and strategies; additions of computer or science labs; new grading or examination policies; the formation of a study group or task force to on the study of repeat offenders and how to help them become more successful students. Other changes resulting from collective study and reflection and identified by at least two schools include more choices for students, increased celebrations of progress, greater involvement of students as participants, greater involvement of parents, and the implementation of multi-age grouping.

Broadening the Decision-Making Community and Increased Student Awareness. Eleven schools indicated that between March 1993 and February 1994, they had involved students and or parents in their decision-making process.

We have asked students the same four questions in all schools for four years. The first two years, it appeared that those students we interviewed were not aware that teachers were involved in making decisions other than those in their classrooms. Now, on-site reports indicate that students are more aware that teachers are meeting and making decisions about what happens in their school. This increased awareness has implications for the assertion that shared governance models the democratic process for students.

Studying the Professional Literature. Within the League and as part of the schoolwide action research framework, we advocate the collection and use of on-site information and the collection and use of external information. As school faculties begin to study the health of their organization or focus on specific areas of interest, we encourage them to seek information from outside their school, information such as research articles, theoretical pieces, books, videotapes, and stories of what has worked in other sites.

In the forty-one 1993-1994 on-site reports, nine schools reported the study of articles and other external sources as part of their action research process. Four of these schools were fourth-year League members; two were third-year members; and three were second-year members. Seven were elementary schools; two were high schools. For nine schools, the study of external information had permeated the culture enough so that it was identified as a data source that informed their collective decision-making process.

Data-Based Reflections from the Authors. For someone who has not studied the collection and sharing of data within the school, the lists above might not seem impressive. For those of us who have watched and attempted to facilitate the schoolwide sharing of information about what students are experiencing, these lists seem impressive. Especially impressive is the number of schools that report the use of existing/archival data (grades, referrals, suspensions) to inform them about the climate of their school and about their students' progress in school.

Grades are an example of fate control data. As long as schools are assigning grades, and student progress through the organization and admittance into other educational institutions is as controlled by grades as it is currently, all members of each educationa' unit need to have some idea of how well students are progressing as indicated by these grades.

Schools interested in student achievement, student motivation, and school climate look regularly at their referral, suspension, and absences data. One reason is that these data indicate whether or not students are present for instruction. There are not many "climate" indicators more powerful than whether the body is present and on time for instruction. These schools have come a long way from no one looking at schoolwide data, from only the chief administrator looking at data on what all students were experiencing, or from looking the faculty looking at the results of standardized tests in order to set state or district required "improvement goals". Gradually, more members of the organization are becoming informed about what all students are experiencing. And more teachers are beginning to see, to use their own words, "the big picture."

Collective study and use of information from beyond the school site is difficult for most faculties to establish. Far more than the nine schools mentioned above used the Information Retrieval System provided by the League to acquire articles, books, and videotapes during the March 1993 to February 1994 membership year. However, provision of information does not mean utilization. The collective study of resources pertinent to the school's area of interest and used as a source to inform organizational decisions runs smack into the cellular structure of schools and into a long-established work-day and work-year that almost prohibits collective study, reflection, and action by the school community. So, while we wish that we had 52 schools instead of nine in this group, we are pleased that the study of on-site data and external information is changing the norms of interaction in at least one-sixth of the League schools. Whether this change will be institutionalized, only time can tell.

Descriptions of Cultural Practices that Impede Schoolwide Action Research. We think that these League schools have courageous faculties. Regardless of the quality of

education they were offering their students, they sought and are seeking as a collectivity to make this education even better. However, these courageous faculties deal with at least six major cultural practices that function as barriers to the development of a self-renewing school:

1) the lack of time;
2) the number of initiatives pursued;
3) the manner in which goals and initiatives are selected;
4) the lack of awareness and provision of serious staff development;
5) the rare use of schoolwide data on a regular basis to modify action; and
6) the lack of involvement of students in the collective study process.

Let us look at the problem of **time** first. The organizational configuration of most school days makes it extremely difficult to establish the school as a center of collective inquiry. Staff members--and students and parents--need time to organize and study the data they collect, to read and discuss the external information they collect, and to discuss the results of current actions and possible future actions. School staff can go only so far with these changes on their own. The policy makers governing the schools must work with educators to change this configuration if they want school improvement to occur.

The **number of initiatives pursued** by some school faculties ensures that nothing will happen for all students. There is no focus for collegial action, and there are so many simultaneous demands that collective action becomes almost impossible. Of the 41 League schools for which we have both on-site reports and action plans and the 6 for which we have only current action plans, 15 of these schools are working on one or two initiatives; 11 are working on three to four initiatives; thirteen are working on five or six initiatives; and eight are working on seven or more initiatives. For most schools there simply is not time nor energy nor resources to permit the serious, in-depth collective study and reflection and modification of actions for more that one or two major goals or initiatives at one time. The equity of student opportunities in terms of collective action around a commonly and highly valued goal becomes lost.

The proliferation of initiatives and inability to focus as a collectivity on a few highly valued goals at a time may be the domestication of the innovation of schoolwide action research as it encounters the autonomy of teachers in the classroom and the individualism of controlling what students will experience classroom by classroom and teacher by teacher. Neither shared governance nor schoolwide action research are intended to diminish the flexibility of teachers as professionals; however, shared governance and schoolwide action research require some collective action, and they require the willingness of staff members to

behave as members of an organization. Collective action to improve student learning cannot occur if everyone wants to pursue her or his individual interests and will not agree to study or pursue anything as a community or organizational member.

The **manner in which collective goals and initiatives are selected** does not match a mode of collective disciplined inquiry at the school site level. We do not know if we can say this properly, but here goes. The League as an organization advocates that external information and resources be one data source that flows regularly into the decision-making process of the school. As noted earlier, the use of external information to inform decision-making has been difficult to establish as part of the norms of interaction within the schools. However, when it comes to the selection of goals and initiatives to pursue, Leadership Teams and faculties tend to adopt an externally-generated idea, approach, or program as if it were a known entity that would bring about all good things in instruction, curriculum, student achievement, or behavior, instead of selecting an idea, approach, or program as a hypothesis for testing in their school environment. It is ironic that schools, on one hand, do not seem to value external information enough to make its study part of their decision-making process; on the other hand, they will adopt external innovations without question. The contrast is between the general acceptance of popular, "well-advertised" innovations and the conduct of serious inquiry around goals of common value and how the school community can move forward in attaining these goals.

For school faculties and for those who seek to facilitate site-based school improvement, there is a paradox in this use of external information and resources. While many of us work to provide and to support school faculties in their use of external information and believe that many school faculties need human technical assistance to move forward in schoolwide action research, we are concerned about the tendency to seek "solutions" from outside as intact ideas or "packages." We believe the inquiry mode that involves the schoolwide study, selection, and rejection of innovations is essential to school renewal. The creation of this mode of collective inquiry appears to be a matter of awareness, understanding, and will among the school faculty.

The lack of **awareness of the need for and provision of adequate staff development** prohibits many faculties from attaining their collective goal(s). Lewin reminded us in 1946 that "we should consider action, research, and training as a triangle that should be kept together for the sake of any of its corners" (p. 211). Bluntly, if school faculties knew how to improve student learning in a particular area throughout the school, they would already be doing it. It is because we need to learn how to do something different or something more, that we identify an area of need for collective study. The learning of complex conceptual and behavioral tasks requires effort for most persons (Gagne, 1965).

Tasks such as learning new teaching strategies, new ways of interacting with students, and new ways of managing time in the classroom requires training for most teachers (Joyce and Showers, 1988). A few League school teams and faculties are beginning to recognize this need, but for the most part, the schools are so ingrained in current practices and attending to immediate needs that faculties and staffs are not provided with adequate training to make it possible for them to employ the innovations they select to support goal attainment.

The rare **use of schoolwide data on a regular basis to modify current action** means that some of our school faculties remain stuck in the summative, judgmental use of data instead of moving into the formative use of data to guide current decisions and practices. More League schools collect data and use it on a year by year basis than on a weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis. This time lapse makes much data collected about student achievement and behavior impossible to use with the current student population. This time lapse runs against the use of data collection and analysis to inform current practice. We know that this cycle of data use and reflection is not present in the culture of most schools (Goodlad, 1984; Sirotnik, 1987); however, League school faculties strive to establish this collective study cycle. Yet, the patterns of behavior needed to sustain this collective study are foreign to current cultural patterns. They work hard, but the going is all uphill for most.

The **lack of involvement of students in the schoolwide action research process** means that we keep them in a somewhat passive role in the attainment of goals designed to change their behavior. Within the League framework, we encourage school faculties moving into shared governance to focus first on sharing decisions between teachers and administrators, and to include other role groups such as paraprofessionals, parents, community members, and students as they wish. In schoolwide action research, we encourage school faculties to involve students from the beginning: inform students of the goals or involve them in identifying schoolwide goals; involve them in collecting data, and when possible in organizing, analyzing, and interpreting these data; update them in terms of progress; and involve them in identifying possible actions to be tested through implementation. While we know that student learning goals cannot be attained without student participation, the movement of students into the role of participating members in the school community instead of solely as clients of the school community remains slow.

General Reflections. We know that student effects are a difficult bottom-line in school improvement (David and Peterson, 1984; Louis and Miles, 1990; Muncey and McQuillan, 1993). We know that cultural change is difficult for our schools (Bennis, 1989; Berman and Gjelten, 1984; Deal, 1993; Mutchler and Duttweiler, 1990; Prestine, 1992; Rollow and Bryk, 1993; Sarason, 1982 and 1990; Smith, 1993; and Stiegelbauer and

Anderson, 1992). We know that time is a long-standing problem (Goodlad, 1984; David, 1991; Wallace and Wildy, 1993); that overload of initiatives is common (Fullan, 1984, 1992, and 1993); that conscientious use of external information by the school as community is rare (Havelock, 19xx; Huberman and Miles, 1984); that the lack of adequate staff development to support organizational goals is common (Joyce and Showers, 1988; Levine, 1991; Lezotte, 1993); that the participation of students as members of the critical study process is complex (Butler-Kisber, 1993; Strike, 1993); and that the use of data to inform practice is a major cultural change (Corey, 1953; Lewin, 1948; Goodlad, 1984; Sirotnik, 1987; Miles, 1992). Yet, with all the known complexities and difficulties, courageous and determined school faculties and districts do make these changes. Each year that the work of League school faculties has been studied has revealed collective movement forward in one or more of these areas (Calhoun, 1991; Hensley, Calhoun, and Glickman, 1992; and Calhoun and Glickman, 1993).

As part of these general reflections, we wish to share some reminders from "Transforming School Culture" by Maehr and Buck (1993):

> Not only can schools be characterized by a 'culture,' but the nature of that 'culture' determines how, what, and whether children learn. . . . We are calling for extensive change and transformation in the way school define the meaning of schooling. Purposes and goals must be examined and in many cases drastically changed. Business as usual is not likely to eventuate in such efforts. Teachers must rethink how they teach; they must ask questions about the wider environment of learning experienced by students. Simply sticking to one's classroom and to one's subject matter will not do it. The mathematics teacher has to be concerned about schoolwide recognition of students and about what demands for ability grouping might do--not only to his students but to the scheduling of other classes and the character of the school as a whole. More than worry and concern are demanded; more than thinking and discussion are required. Action, experimentation, and a degree of risk taking are needed if cultural transformation if to occur. . . . Transforming school culture involves more than having knowledge about what exists and what can be done. It involves both administrators and staff having the **will** to change. (pp. 42, 52, and 53)

Reflections and Current Advice

Schoolwide action research requires open community around information, for it is cooperative disciplined inquiry into the health of the school. The charter for shared governance developed by most League schools to guide their interactions around schoolwide decisions serves also as a blueprint for cultural change. The development and adoption of these charters for democratic behavior within the school community would not be necessary if the United States Constitution were living in every school. If our Constitution had served as a guideline in establishing educational institutions, schoolwide action research would be a much easier innovation to pursue.

As it is with the cultural norms in most League schools, the adoption of a governance charter and the initiation of action research signals the beginning of a journey into understanding. We have attempted to share some of the elements of this journey as experienced by League school members.

In the rediscovery of American Constitutional life, many of these school faculties first set up structures such as the charter that enable them to begin to learn how to live as a nurturant and productive community in the workplace of the school. The relationship between shared governance and action research relates to the Deweyian notion that the continuous experiment in democracy involves the process and utilization of the "scientific method." This Deweyian conception of democracy in education is a central concept in schoolwide action research.

League school faculties are not just teaching students how to behave, they are learning how to create an institution that lives the renewal process through continuous cycles of studying, reflecting, and acting.

As we facilitate these schools and learn from them, we want them to develop more than a culture that enables school improvement; we want to support them in creating an environment that reflects the deeper values of society--to create a place where people work and think together, a place that engages in continual collaborative inquiry around life and learning.

This journey that schools are undertaking and the successes and difficulties they encounter are the same for the League as a unit. League staff and associates are as culture bound as our schools, and it is as difficult for us to break set as it is for the schools. We are of the same culture. Allocating time for collaborative inquiry and discourse, providing time for cooperative disciplined inquiry around the goals of the League, providing staff

development for ourselves as learners, and running on personal knowledge instead of continual study, inquiry and exploration are the same cultural difficulties present in League school. But, like the schools, we do not give up the journey. We pursue democracy in action by the governed and of the governed.

Here are our recommendations for supporting schoolwide action research:

1. Seek and work with policy-makers to ensure time for collaborative work.

2. Use an inquiry mode for learning to conduct schoolwide action research; one does not have to be "ready" or all-knowing to begin the journey.

3. Develop and tend a core group to lead the effort.

4. Include students in the action research process.

5. Keep the focus on student learning.

6. Seek technical assistance, if needed, and provide staff development for innovations.

Deal (1993) reminds us that the same shared culture that gives meaning and stability to the process of education also "frustrates efforts to improve, reform, or change educational forms and practices at all levels." The changes that many of us want for ourselves and our students as a part of schoolwide action research will alter the existing culture of our classrooms and schools. Consequently, serious action research is tough work in most school settings. Too often, our stance as we engage in it is becomes one of activity accomplishment instead of inquiry; one of moving through the steps instead of exploration of effects. When this occurs, we have little cultural change. Schoolwide action research simply dissolves into the stable culture as have many other promising innovations in education. We must **will it and live it** otherwise, or we and our schools will remain the same, and we will have only tinkered with the edges of our potential and the potential educational world of our students.

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APPENDIX

Item 1

and Item 2

Item 1 - a

ON-SITE FACILITATION

1. Take the school's action plan with you to help you focus on what they have indicated to be their priorities

2. Guided walk through the school to gain a sense of students, teachers, organization for teaching, and teaching (30 minutes)

3. *Interviews with the following people

   a) principal (40 minutes)

   b) chair of governing board (40 minutes)

   c) a teacher who has been active with the school's action research efforts and one who has not taken an active role in the school's League activities (40 minutes each)

   d) one group of 4 to 5 students from different grade levels that are representative of the school's population (30 minutes)

4. Review of relevant materials (memos, letters, announcements, charters, constitutions, school plans, and data)

5. Group discussion with the shared leadership group to provide the opportunity to ask questions, share their expertise, provide feedback to PSI and League Congress concerning League procedures and services, and update and clarify any information needed to enhance our collaboration (30 minutes)

6. Spend the remainder of the time doing whatever the school thinks is important to do

*Before the visitation it will be necessary to identify someone in the school to arrange a time schedule for interviews. The faculty and students interviewed should be volunteers and representative of the **socioeconomic** and **racial make-up** of the school.

**Assure each interviewee of confidentiality and that notes will be used only to summarize the schools' improvement efforts and will not identify any individual. Interviews may be tape recorded if permission is granted by those being interviewed.

Item 1-b

Directions for On-Site Visit

1) You should conduct five interviews taking a total of 3 hours, have a discussion with the school's leadership team, and take a walk through the school and classrooms.

2) Interviews may be tape recorded if permission is granted by those being interviewed. Please assure those being interviewed that the tape will be used only to recall answers to questions and will not be shared with anyone in their school or district. Field notes of responses should be made on protocol sheets. Try to uncover specific operating procedures, decisions made, educational and instructional changes made, and documented results.

3) Assure each interviewee of confidentiality and that notes will be used only to summarize a story of the school's improvement efforts and will not identify any individual.

4) If you see artifacts of importance (memos, minutes, evaluations, action research results), ask to make a copy.

5) After the interview, the school should receive (within ten working days) a two to five page summary of what you have found and what would be helpful to them in future planning.

Format for School Reports

Section I - Summary of Interviews

Part I - Summary of all the responses for each question on the teacher/principal interviews

Part I - Summary of student group interview

Section II - Summary of Central Tenents of League Schools

Synthesis of faculty interviews, school artifacts, and observations regarding the school's shared governance process, action research efforts, and educational changes

Section III - Information for Further Consideration

Information to the faculty for their further consideration

This might include conclusions, questions, and speculations. It is important that this section not be written as directive judgments, but instead as information that a school might wish to consider in its future plans and activities.

Item 1-c

Interview Questions of Administrators and Teachers

#1. What changes have you made in your decision-making process this year? (Also want a sense of their degree of satisfaction with their governance procedures.)

#2. What instructional initiatives have been implemented through your shared decision making process? (Be sure they cover changes during the last year.)

#3. What have been the results of these initiatives? (What has happened for students?)

#4. Describe how you are doing action research in your school. (What have you been collecting, measuring, keeping track of? (Double check to make sure you are communicating by asking for any evidence the school has that informs them of the effectiveness of their instructional initiatives.)

#5. What actions or modifications have been taken as a result of your action research data? (Has the school taken any action or changed their way of doing something because of the information they have generated or uncovered through their action research efforts?)

#6. What is your school doing to sustain its renewal process? (What are they doing to involve new people, sustain the morale of people who have been working hard, keep their effort fresh, communicate good news, etc..)

#7. How has your school changed since joining the League?

#8. What advice would you give schools new to implementing shared governance and action research processes?

#9. What has been the hardest part of your school's efforts at implementing the three premises of the League?

#10 How have you sought to overcome these difficulties? (What resources have they drawn upon; what, if any, of the League services have been helpful?)

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDE

1. How would you describe this school to another student planning on coming here?

2. How are decisions made about what goes on in your classroom? (prompt: if you wanted to change some of the things you do in class, what would you do?)

3. How are decisions made about what goes on in your school? (prompt: if students wanted to change something about the school, how would they go about trying to get this done?)

4. What would make this an even better school?

Item 2

LEAGUE OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SYSTEM USE
FOURTH YEAR SCHOOLS (19)

LEVEL	1990-1991	1991-1992	1992-1993	1993-1994
Elementary	0	0	0	3
Elementary	1	3	0	6
Elementary	4	3	1	9
Elementary	1	1	1	7
Elementary	1	1	0	0
Elementary	5	10	2	6
Elementary	4	0	0	0
Elementary	4	1	1	4
Elementary	3	3	1	1
Elementary	0	4	4	0
Elementary	10	3	3	1
Elementary	9	5	0	8
Elementary	0	4	2	1
Middle	1	2	0	6
Middle	0	1	0	1
Middle	3	3	0	2
High	1	1	4	3
High	3	1	0	0
High	0	2	0	0
	TOTAL 50 (N = 14)	TOTAL 48 (N = 17)	TOTAL 19 (N = 9)	TOTAL 58 (N = 14)

TOTAL = Number of topics for which school personnel requested information.
N = Number of current fourth-year member schools that made requests during the designated (e.g., 1990-1991) membership year.

LEAGUE OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SYSTEM USE
THIRD YEAR SCHOOLS (17)

LEVEL	1991-1992	1992-1993	1993-1994
Elementary	7	0	1
Elementary	0	4	1
Elementary	8	1	0
Elementary	0	0	2
Elementary	3	0	0
Elementary	1	4	1
Elementary	5	2	0
Elementary	4	5	0
Elementary	6	1	1
Elementary	5	0	3
Elementary	16	1	1
Middle	1	0	0
High	0	2	2
High	1	0	18
High	0	0	20
High	5	0	2
High	6	1	0
	TOTAL 68 (N = 13)	TOTAL 21 (N = 9)	TOTAL 52 (N = 11)

TOTAL = Number of topics for which school personnel requested information.
N = Number of current third-year member schools that made requests during the designated (e.g., 1991-1992) membership year.

LEAGUE OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SYSTEM USE
SECOND YEAR SCHOOLS (13)

LEVEL	1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995
Elementary	6	4	
Elementary	0	4	
Elementary	0	10	
Elementary	1	2	
Elementary	0	10	
Elementary	2	3	
Elementary	0	8	
Elementary	3	1	
Elementary	9	4	
Middle	2	0	
Middle	1	2	
Middle	0	2	
Middle	2	1	
Middle	1	0	
Middle	0	1	
High	1	3	
High	0	0	
High	1	0	
	TOTAL 29 (N = 11)	TOTAL 48 (N = 14)	

TOTAL = Number of topics for which school personnel requested information.
N = Number of current second-year member schools that made requests during the designated (e.g., 1992-1993) membership year.